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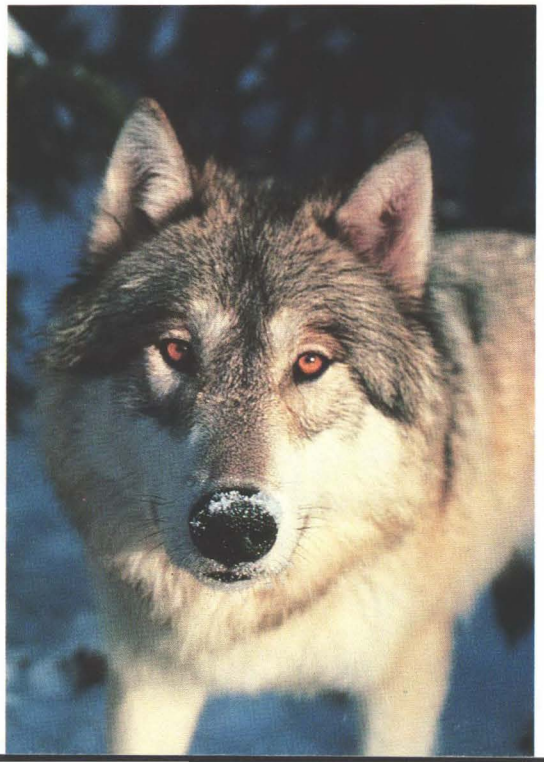
United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

FS-491

Sharing the Commitment:
Partnerships for Wildlife, Fish, and Rare Plants on the National Forests



JERRY DAVIS

Dale Robertson (right), chief of the USDA Forest Service, helps Arkansas Game and Fish Commission biologist Mike Widner prepare to band a wild turkey. The gobbler was subsequently released on the Ouachita National Forest.

Our national forests and grasslands are rich in diversity, with more species of wildlife, fish, and plants than any other single land ownership in the country. Providing unparalleled opportunities for hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing, these lands are truly an American treasure.

The Forest Service manages habitat to produce wildlife and fish; protect threatened, endangered, and sensitive species; and benefit all types and groups of national forest users. The challenges to manage and expand these resources on the Nation's forests are real. It is through the commitment and support of our numerous partners that we are successful in producing world class wildlife and fisheries resources.

This publication illustrates the myriad accomplishments of the Forest Service and our partners to enhance habitat for wildlife, fish, and rare plant resources on the National Forest System in 1990. It is a tribute to the committed—the 43 State fish and wildlife agencies, Federal agencies, conservation groups, civic organizations, and individuals representing our more than 1,700 partnership projects in wildlife, fish, and plant conservation. To our partners in conservation, we extend our appreciation.

F. Dale Robertson
Chief, USDA Forest Service

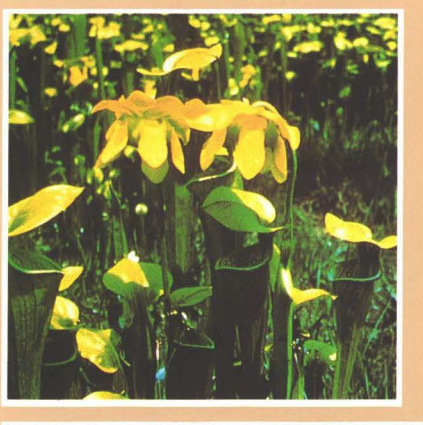
Photos:
Woodcock, front cover—USDA Forest Service
Trapping bighorn sheep, front cover—Bud Smith
Grizzly bear, front cover—Bill Munoz
Bighorn sheep, front cover—USDA Forest Service
Gray wolf, front cover—Bill Munoz
Stocking fish, front cover—Marilyn Cagle
Owls, back cover—USDA Forest Service
Wasatch National Forest, back cover—Winifred Kessler

Our Resources...Our Challenge

Managing habitats . . . conserving plants and animals . . . sharing the commitment . . . meeting the challenge—all collectively describe the monumental task before the Forest Service of ensuring a rich diversity of fish and wildlife for future generations of Americans to enjoy.

The 191-million-acre National Forest System encompasses 156 forests and 19 grasslands. Roughly the size of Texas and Louisiana combined, this national treasure supports diverse habitats for more than 3,000 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, fish, and amphibians, as well as for some 10,000 plant species. Here are just a few examples:

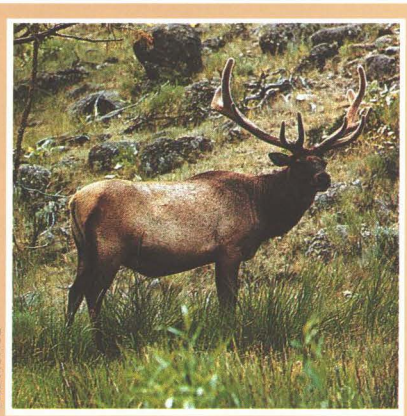
- Eighty percent of the Nation's habitat for elk, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat.
- More than 28 million acres of habitat supporting almost a half million turkeys.
- Half the spawning and rearing habitat in the lower 48 States for salmon and steelhead.
- Thirty-three percent of all federally listed endangered and threatened species.
- In excess of 38 million acres and 57 million acres of habitat for quail and grouse, respectively.
- As much as 12 million acres of waterfowl habitat, including Alaska's 700,000-acre Copper River Delta, which provides breeding grounds for more than 20 million waterfowl and shorebirds.



ANDY ROBINSON

USDA FOREST SERVICE

The national forests and grasslands support abundant wildlife, fish, and rare plants, such as endangered green pitcher plants, blue gill, and elk.



BILL MUNOZ

- 179,909,700 lbs commercially harvested salmon

- 2 million acres of fishable lakes, ponds, and reservoirs
- 128,000 miles of streams
- 16,500 miles of coastline

Estimated fisheries resources on the National Forest System.
(Source: USDA Forest Service, 2/91.)

Elk 562,600 | Deer 3,206,100 | Bighorn sheep 25,400 | Turkey 446,400

Estimated big game populations on the National Forest System. (Source: USDA Forest Service, 2/91.)

Boundless Opportunities

Not only are these lands rich in diversity, but their potential for outdoor use is equally impressive. In 1990, Americans made 28.5 million visits—with an economic value of more than $1 billion—to fish the waterways of our national forests. Nearly 179 million pounds of fish from National Forest System lands were commercially harvested in 1990 at a value of more than $189 million. Hunters made more than 30 million visits, at an economic value of $636 million, in pursuit of big game, waterfowl, and upland game birds.

Photography, birdwatching, and nature study are becoming increasingly popular with forest and grassland visitors. In 1990, people made 21.5 million visits to view wildlife on the National Forest System at an estimated economic worth of $441 million. And the number of visits to fish, hunt, and view wildlife on national forests and grasslands is expected to increase by 183 percent in the next 50 years!

The challenges to manage and expand these resources are real. These challenges can be met only through investments of leadership, energy, creativity, time, and support of our partners in conservation.

DAVE RITTENHOUSE

HUBERT LOWMAN

MICHAEL FURTMAN

USDA FOREST SERVICE

Not only are national forests rich in diversity, but they provide enormous economic and recreational benefits as well. Each year, millions of people visit these lands to hunt, fish, and view wildlife.

Sharing the Commitment

In 1986, the United States Congress established the ***Challenge Cost-Share Program***—a unique venture in which the State and private sectors share in both the management and the cost of Federal habitat improvement programs. In 1990, Forest Service partnerships for habitat improvement blossomed nationwide.

Who are our partners? They include thousands of people from hundreds of organizations and agencies like the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, Boy Scouts of America, National Wild Turkey Federation, Trout Unlimited, Quail Unlimited, Defenders of Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy, and The Ruffed Grouse Society. They also include representatives from government agencies on all levels, including 43 State fish and wildlife agencies, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In addition, numerous individuals give of their time and talents to improve fish passages for steelhead and salmon, plant trees and shrubs along streambanks for fish cover and bank stabilization, enhance water and forage conditions for turkeys, conduct inventories of plant species sensitive to human activities, and complete countless other habitat improvement and management projects. The energy, dedication, and spirited volunteerism shown by our partners translate to a brighter outlook for wildlife and fish resources on the National Forest System.

ROY MURPHY

USDA FOREST SERVICE

Partners in conservation ... through Challenge Cost-Share initiatives, citizens have the unique opportunity to participate in wildlife and fisheries habitat enhancement and management projects and to see first-hand measureable improvements to their national forest resources.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION Working for Wildlife

DUCKS UNLIMITED

I.A.F.W.A.

BASS BASS ANGLERS SPORTSMAN SOCIETY

TROUT UNLIMITED

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

National Audubon Society

THE RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY MEMBER

The following organizations and agencies have signed national agreements, showing their commitment to work with the Forest Service in efforts to conserve, manage, and restore wildlife and fish resources on the National Forest System.

American Birding Association
Amerifish Corporation
The American Fisheries Society
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Bass Anglers Sportsman Society, Inc.
British Columbia Ministry of Environment
British Columbia Ministry of Forests
Bureau of Land Management
Bureau of Reclamation
The Center for Environmental Study
Cornell University, Department of Natural Resources
Defenders of Wildlife
Department of the Air Force
Department of the Army
Department of the Navy
Ducks Unlimited
Environmental Law Institute
Federation of Fly Fishers
Foundation for North American Wild Sheep
International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
The Izaak Walton League of America, Inc.
The Keystone Center
The Mule Deer Foundation
National Audubon Society
National Park Service
National Rifle Association of America
National Wild Turkey Federation
National Wildlife Federation
The Nature Conservancy
Quail Unlimited, Inc.
Rocky Mountain Bighorn Society
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
The Ruffed Grouse Society
The Sport Fishing Institute
Times Mirror Magazines, Inc.
Trout Unlimited
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Utah State University, Forest Resources Department
Waterfowl USA Limited, Inc.
Whitetails Unlimited, Inc.
Wildlife Management Institute

Measuring Success...

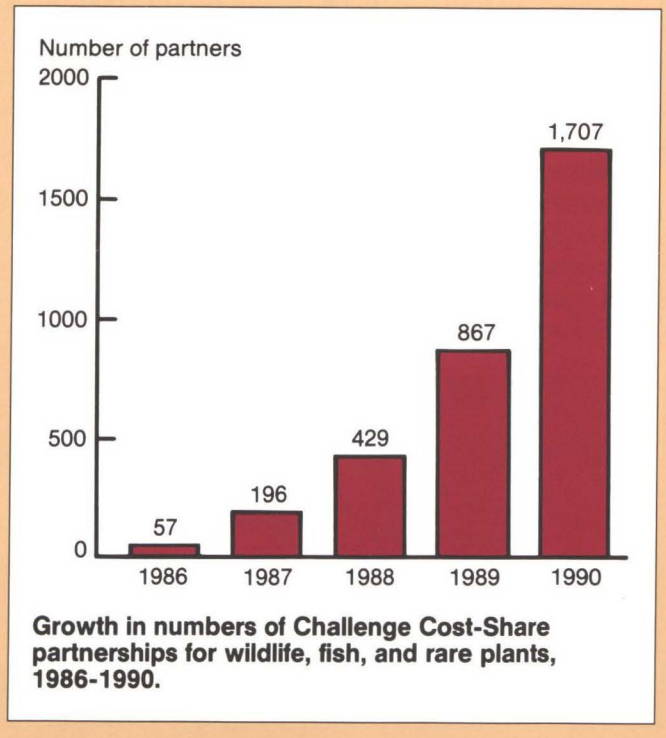
Through Forest Service partnership programs like:

Get Wild, a national program that includes efforts to manage habitat for all forms of wildlife;

Rise to the Future, a national program that emphasizes improving fisheries habitat and recreational fishing opportunities; and

Every Species Counts, a national program to conserve and manage endangered, threatened, and sensitive species on National Forest System lands;

we can extend and expand the value of our fish and wildlife resources. In 1990, the Forest Service and its partners turned $9.9 million of Federal funding into $22.3 million worth of habitat improvement projects.

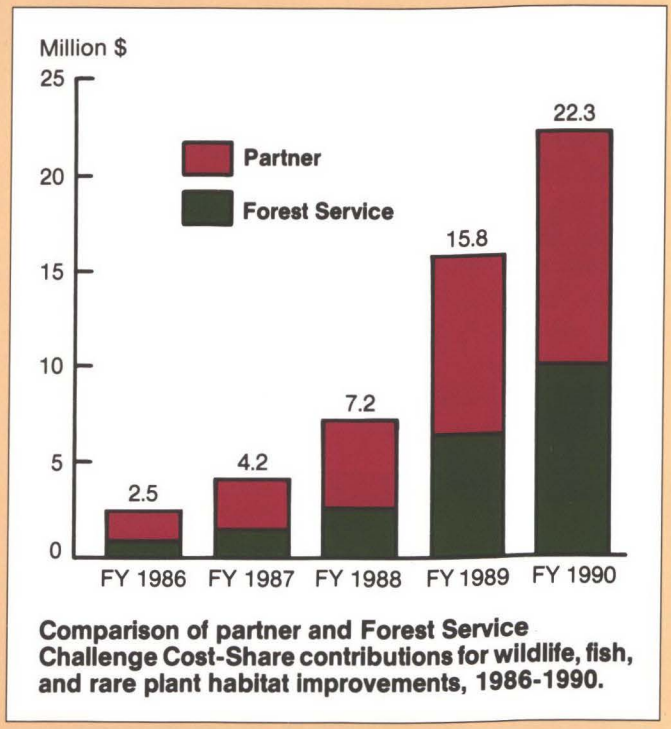


Growth in numbers of Challenge Cost-Share partnerships for wildlife, fish, and rare plants, 1986-1990.

Challenge Cost-Share Program accomplishments included 15,031 habitat structures, such as nest boxes, fish ladders, and watering devices; 466,310 acres (includes 350,000 acres of access management improvements) of improved habitat; and 1,221 inventories, reports, and surveys for wildlife, fish, and threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.

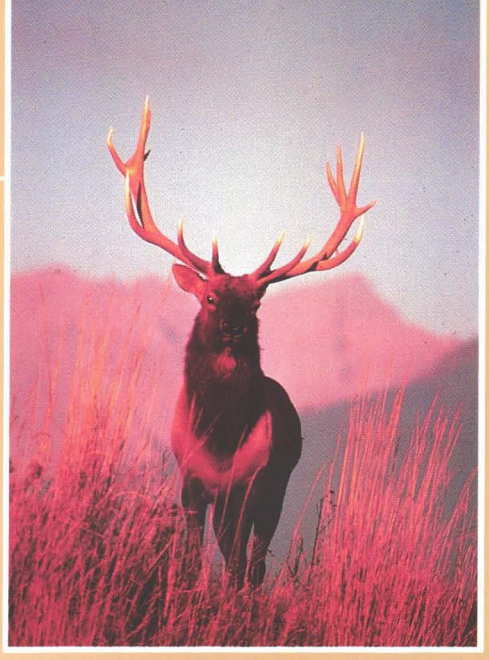
Combined accomplishments for ***Get Wild, Rise to the Future***, and ***Every Species Counts*** from all other funding sources (i.e., Forest Service appropriations, Knutsen Vandenburg [K-V] funds, and timber receipt funds) in 1990 included 42,155 habitat structures and 434,578 acres of improved habitat.

The growth in the number of partnerships—from 57 in 1986 to 1,707 in 1990—and in the number of contributions, have been phenomenal. Let's take a closer look at what the Forest Service and its partners accomplished in 1990 through ***Get Wild, Rise to the Future,*** and ***Every Species Counts!***



Comparison of partner and Forest Service Challenge Cost-Share contributions for wildlife, fish, and rare plant habitat improvements, 1986-1990.

Get Wild!



DANNY ON

The National Forest System harbors the greatest diversity of wildlife—from watchable wildlife to big game—under any single land ownership nationwide. To coordinate management and enhancement of these diverse wildlife resources, the Forest Service and its partners initiated the ***Get Wild*** program in 1988.

Within the framework of this program, the Forest Service cooperates with State and other Federal agencies, as well as wildlife interest groups, to inventory and enhance habitat, survey and monitor wildlife populations, provide interpretative and educational opportunities for forest users, and protect special habitats, such as snags and riparian areas.

Get Wild is made up of eight emphasis areas: "Taking Wing" for waterfowl, "Full Curl" for bighorn sheep, "Making Tracks" for turkey, "Animal Inn" for wildlife dependent upon dead wood, "Dancers in the Forest" for grouse and woodcock, "Answer the Call" for quail, "A Million Bucks" for deer, "Elk Country," and for wildlife viewing and appreciation, "Eyes on Wildlife." It is within these emphasis areas that the Forest Service and its partners team up to make vital improvements to wildlife habitat on National Forest System lands.

Accomplishments of ***Get Wild*** in 1990 include:

- Improvement of 449,266 acres (includes 350,000 acres of access management improvements) and construction of 3,582 habitat structures with Challenge Cost-Share dollars.
- Improvement of 349,852 acres of habitat and completion of 23,329 habitat structures from all other funding sources (i.e., appropriated funds, K-V funds, and timber receipt funds).

USDA FOREST SERVICE

Nearly one third of all forest creatures, including this bobcat, seek refuge in hollow or fallen trees. ***Get Wild's*** *"Animal Inn" helps people realize the importance of dead wood for wildlife.*

SPOTLIGHTS ON *GET WILD* PAR

SOUTHWESTERN REGION UPDATE

Guzzlers for Elk

Six rain and snow catchments or "guzzlers" were constructed for elk use in the Tusayan Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest. Each guzzler—with a water-holding capacity of 17,000 gallons—was strategically placed to improve herd distribution and minimize competition for habitat use between elk and livestock. Combining resources with the Forest Service to complete this "Elk Country" project were the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. The Forest Service contributed $42,600, the Arizona Game and Fish Department $40,000 (plus all equipment and labor), and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation $14,400.

GAIL TUNBERG

- Acquisition of a 7,000-acre ranch in Montana to provide additional winter range for the Northern Yellowstone elk herd ("Elk Country").
- Establishment of a strategic plan to promote watchable wildlife—a partnership among nine Federal agencies and five conservation groups ("Eyes on Wildlife").
- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Rifle Association to improve wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities on national forests.
- Installation of a 20-foot snag at the Denver Zoo—a display likely to reach 1.5 million visitors annually with the message "There's Life in Dead Trees" ("Animal Inn").
- And the list goes on!

ROB TUCHER

Salamanders and other unique wildlife capture the interest of millions of forest users each year. ***Get Wild's*** *"Eyes on Wildlife" fosters partnerships to improve and manage habitat for viewing wildlife on national forests and grasslands.*

TNERSHIPS

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION UPDATE

Boardwalk Provides Access to Forest Visitors

Members of the California Native Plant Society, in cooperation with the Stanislaus National Forest's Summit Ranger District, built a boardwalk across a meadow connecting a heavily used campground in the Pinecreast Recreation Area. The second phase of this "Eyes on Wildlife" initiative will be to develop and print an interpretive pamphlet that explains the value of the meadow and the need to protect it from soil compaction and overuse. The California Native Plant Society and the Forest Service contributed $2,300 each toward the completion of this project.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION UPDATE

Bighorn Sheep Re-established into Historical Range

The White River National Forest undertook four "Full Curl" projects to re-establish bighorn sheep. In coordination with the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the Forest released bighorn sheep into historical range, improved winter habitat, and studied existing herds to determine habitat use and limiting factors. Partners included the Rocky Mountain Bighorn Society, providing radio collars and $3,000; Bureau of Land Management, contributing $2,000; Colorado Division of Wildlife, contributing $5,000; Rocky Mountain National Park, providing the bighorn sheep and $1,000; and the Forest Service, providing $13,500.

"Dancers in the Forest" … this ***Get Wild*** *program emphasizes habitat management and improvement for woodcock and grouse, such as this spruce grouse.*

GET WILD!
Partnerships for the 90s

Rise to the Future!

By the year 2040, public demand for quality fishing experiences is expected to double. As more and more Americans take to our national forests to fish, the need to conserve and enhance these resources becomes even more important.

To improve the quality of fisheries habitats on our national forests, the ***Rise to the Future*** program was initiated in 1987. Through this program, the Forest Service works with numerous partners to recover threatened and endangered fishes, to improve the quality of fish habitats, and to provide for increased fishing opportunities for all anglers.

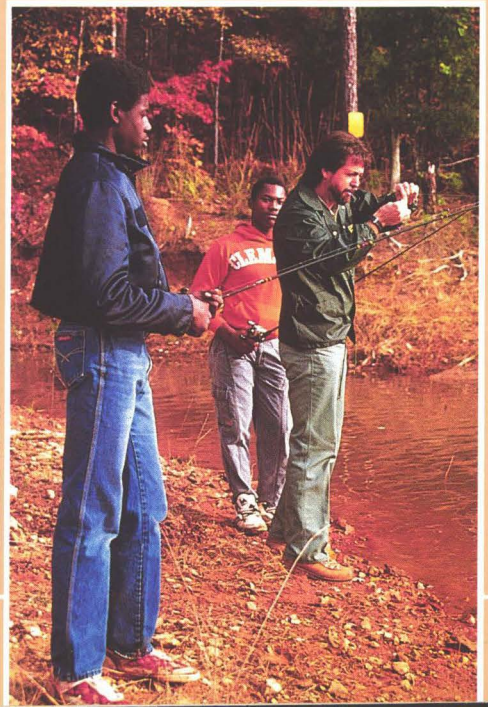
In 1989, the Forest Service developed the Recreational Fisheries Policy to heighten awareness of recreational fishing potential on national forests and grasslands. In 1990, the Bureau of Land Management joined the Forest Service in signing this policy, thereby strengthening existing and future programs and partnerships to manage recreational fishing on nearly 0.5 billion acres of federally administered lands.

Rise to the Future has been extremely successful in bringing the Forest Service to the forefront as a fisheries habitat management agency. Through this program, the Forest Service has developed strong partnerships with major fisheries conservation groups, government agencies, researchers, and the angling public, including signing Memoranda of Understanding with Amerifish Corporation, Bass Anglers Sportsman Society, Inc., Sport Fishing Institute, The American Fisheries Society, Trout Unlimited, and Federation of Fly Fishers.

USDA FOREST SERVICE

In 1990, Challenge Cost-Share Program funds supported improvement of 6,384 acres of habitat and completion of 2,340 structures for salmon and steelhead. An additional 2,113 acres were improved and 4,658 structures built for salmon and steelhead using appropriated funds, K-V funds, and timber receipt funds.

Through the Challenge Cost-Share Program, partners contributed to improvement of 4,999 acres and construction of 8,581 structures for bass, trout, walleye, and other inland fisheries. All other funding sources combined supported improvement of an additional 11,281 acres and construction of 11,848 structures for inland fisheries. Through the dedication and cooperative efforts of our partners, we can ensure bountiful fisheries resources on our national forests and grasslands for future anglers and those who simply enjoy well-kept waters.



USDA FOREST SERVICE

Hands-on educational programs and increased fishing opportunities are examples of the many successes of the ***Rise to the Future*** *program.*

SPOTLIGHTS ON *RISE TO THE FUTURE* PARTNERSHIPS

EASTERN REGION UPDATE

With its abundant rocky shoals providing ideal spawning habitat, Lake Winnibigoshish has long been known as a world-class walleye fishery. Nestled in the Chippewa National Forest, "Winnie" sustains an estimated 900,000 hours of fishing each year—its value as a sport fishery is placed at more than $5.5 million annually.

Unfortunately, the light, sandy soils making up Winnie's shorelines are highly erodible. In recent decades, shorelines have receded hundreds of feet in many locations and the resultant sedimentation has rendered 67 percent of the original walleye spawning habitat along the south shore obsolete.

In response to widespread public support to preserve Winnie's walleye fishery, the Chippewa National Forest pooled resources with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), Leech Lake Indian Reservation, Cass and Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Mississippi Headwaters Board, and dozens of local residents to stabilize more than 11 miles of shoreline. No small task!

The Forest and MNDNR have committed $850,000 to implement shoreline stabilization using a proven rock rip-rap technique developed by the MNDNR. The project can be completed with an additional $3.3 million—$2,830,000 for fish habitat improvement and $470,000 for recreation facilities.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION

The Deschutes National Forest, Fish America, the Deschutes Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Oregon Restoration and Enhancement Board, and Deschutes River Mitigation and Enhancement Committee funded the installation of 250 structures in the Tumalo Creek Watershed to provide needed fish habitat and improve streambank stabilization. Heavy equipment moved full-sized trees to the stream and skidded them into place. An excavator keyed in the trees and built numerous log structures to create pools.

Volunteers from Trout Unlimited, Central Oregon Fly Fishers, local troops of the Boy Scouts of America, and individuals from Bend, Oregon, pitched in to anchor the material to the streambed, as well as plant willows and cottonwoods along the stream following instream structure work. This ***Rise to the Future*** project was embraced as a community effort.

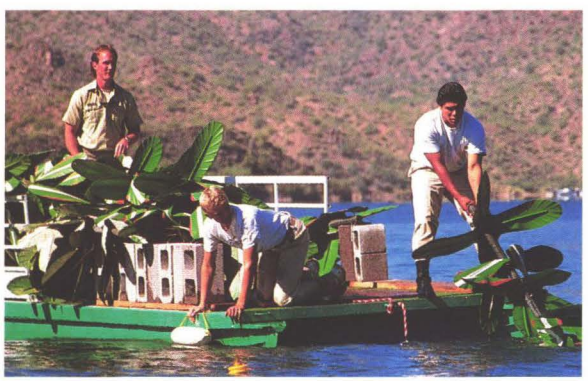
SPOTLIGHTS ON *RISE TO THE FUTURE* PARTNERSHIPS

SOUTHWESTERN REGION UPDATE

Warmwater Fisheries

The Tonto National Forest, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and Anglers United improved fish habitat by installing 40,000 plastic fish-cover structures in Saguaro and Canyon Lakes. A 300-foot-long floating fishing pier for anglers with disabilities was placed at La Barge Cove on Canyon Lake.

JEFF TOPPING



JEFF TOPPING

Participants built and installed 40,000 plastic structures to provide cover for fish in Saguaro and Canyon Lakes in the Tonto National Forest, Arizona.

ALASKA REGION UPDATE

Anadromous Fish

A fish ladder on the Ketchikan Ranger District of the Tongass National Forest has made 24 acres of stream habitat and 145 acres of lake habitat available to coho, sockeye, and pink salmon and steelhead, contributing an additional 545,000 pounds annually to the fishery at an estimated annual value of $230,000. Partners included the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Ketchikan Pulp Company, the Jim Leslie Cutting Company, and the South Coast Construction Company.

NATIONAL FISHING WEEK

Fish Your National Forests

The first week of June is National Fishing Week—an annual event celebrating recreational fishing that is enthusiastically supported by the Forest Service and its civic partners. During this week, local fishing events on national forests emphasize the importance of family outdoor activities and demonstrate the Forest Service's commitment to sport fish management and recreational fishing opportunities.

DON VIRGOVIC

Every Species Counts!

The conservation of threatened, endangered, and rare plants and animals is central to the Forest Service's mission—"Caring for the Land and Serving People." The National Forest System provides homes to 198 plant and animal species listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as either threatened or endangered. This is equivalent to 33 percent of all federally listed species in the United States.

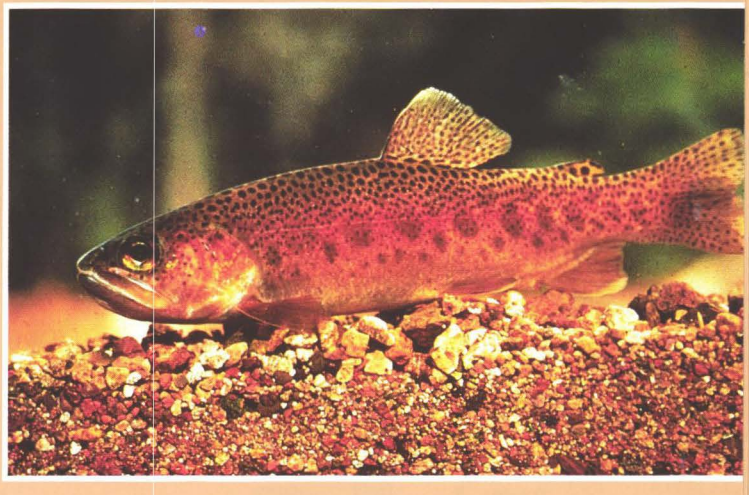
The Forest Service also designates as "sensitive" more than 2,000 additional species of plants and animals for which special management is required to ensure they need not be listed as threatened or endangered in the future. The Southern Region alone has more than 850 sensitive species.

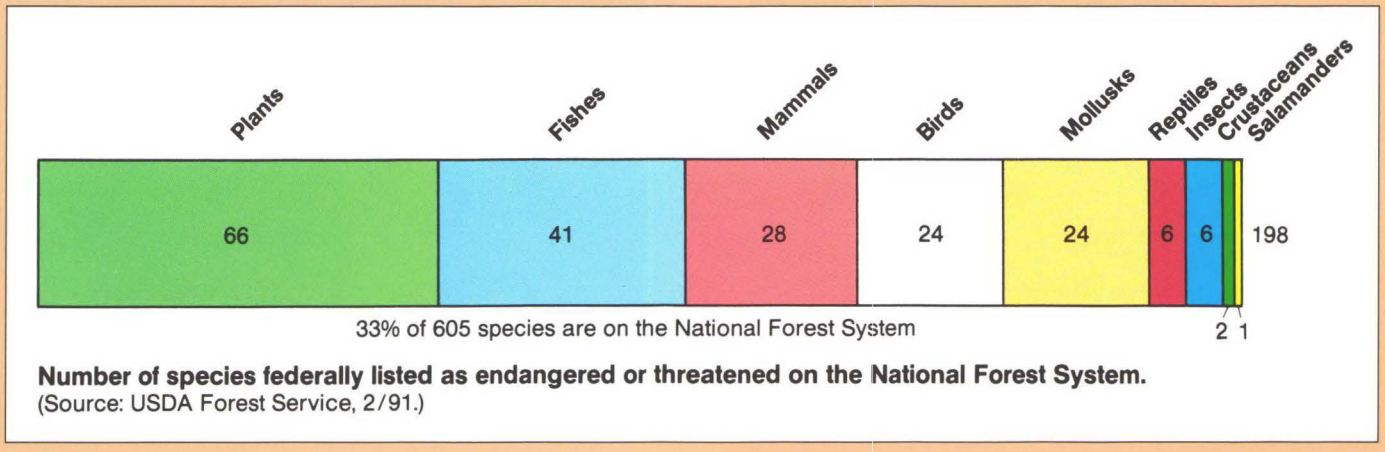
Following the recommendations of a national task force, an action plan was developed in 1990 to strengthen and increase threatened, endangered, and sensitive species program emphasis within the Forest Service. This plan identifies action items, completion dates, and parties responsible for conserving rare species. An offshoot of this plan is the ***Every Species Counts*** program, which brings together the resources and commitment of other Federal and State agencies, private organizations, and individuals to enhance species recovery and conservation. This program has adopted an aggressive approach to protect rare species and to prevent the need for Federal listing.

Federal funding for threatened, endangered, and sensitive species habitat improvements increased from $7.1 million in 1989 to $9.9 million in 1990. Nearly 400 partners contributed an additional $2 million. Accom-

Rare Aquarius Indian paintbrush and Gila trout—examples of the myriad endangered, threatened, and sensitive species living on our national forests.

USDA FOREST SERVICE

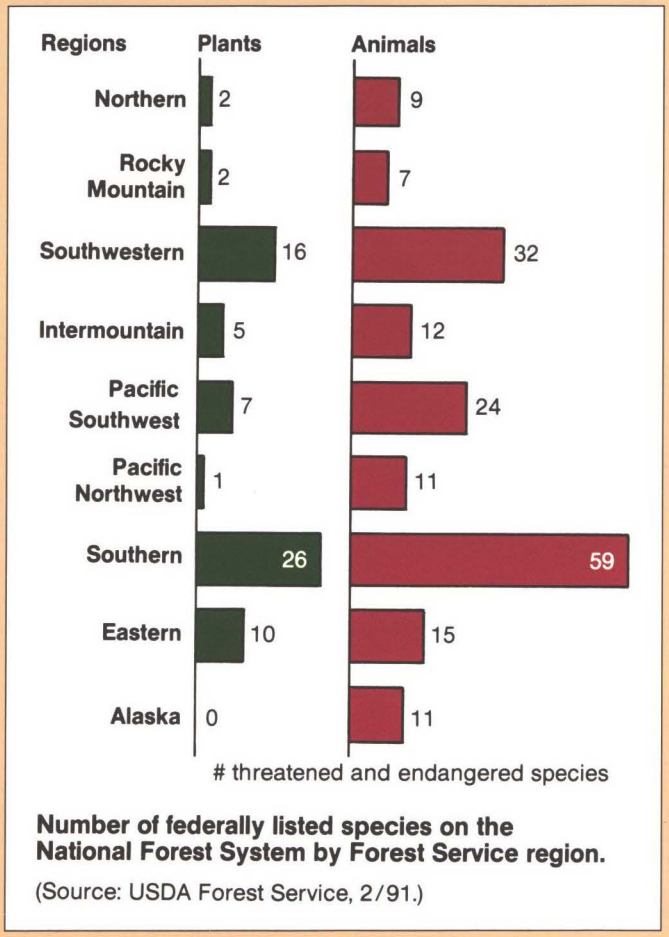




Number of species federally listed as endangered or threatened on the National Forest System.
(Source: USDA Forest Service, 2/91.)

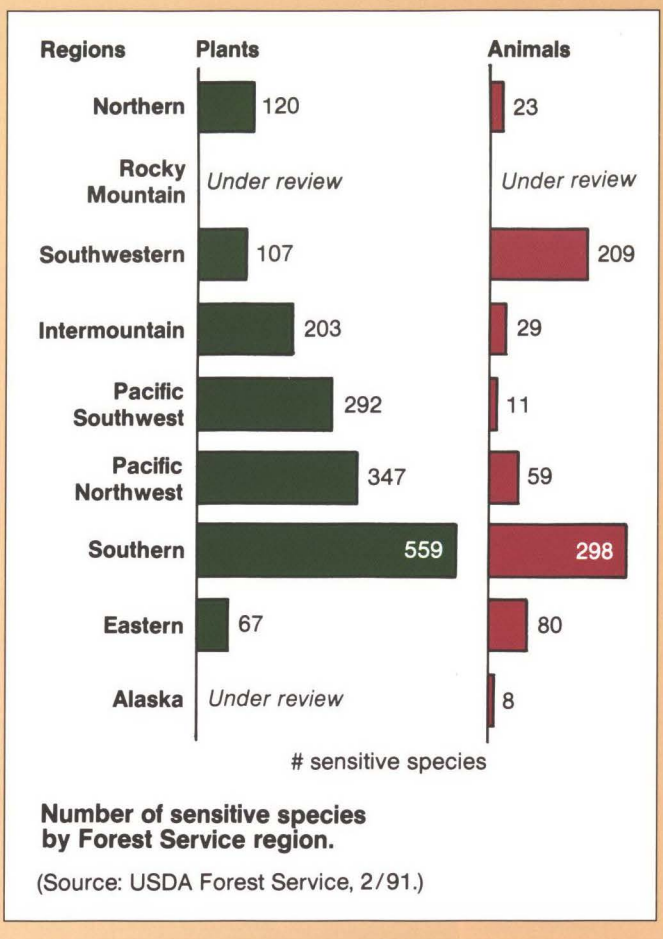
plishments of this fledgling program and its growing number of partners included:

- Improvement of 5,661 acres, completion of 528 structures, and coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on several recovery plans (an additional 71,332 acres were improved and 2,318 structures were built with appropriated funds, K-V funds, and timber receipt funds).
- Implementation of a $1.6 million long-range management program for grizzly bear conservation, which includes mapping 7.6 million acres of bear habitat, reducing human-grizzly conflicts, improving habitat, and educating the public.
- Completion of dozens of projects, in cooperation with State Natural Heritage Inventory programs, to inventory, monitor, and restore rare plants on national forests and grasslands.



Number of federally listed species on the National Forest System by Forest Service region.

(Source: USDA Forest Service, 2/91.)



Number of sensitive species by Forest Service region.

(Source: USDA Forest Service, 2/91.)

In 1989, Hurricane Hugo destroyed 87 percent of the cavity trees used by endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers in the Francis Marion National Forest in South Carolina. Below, a biologist installs one of 550 artificial nesting cavities put in place prior to the 1990 breeding season. Nearly one half of all nests were in artificial cavities in 1990.

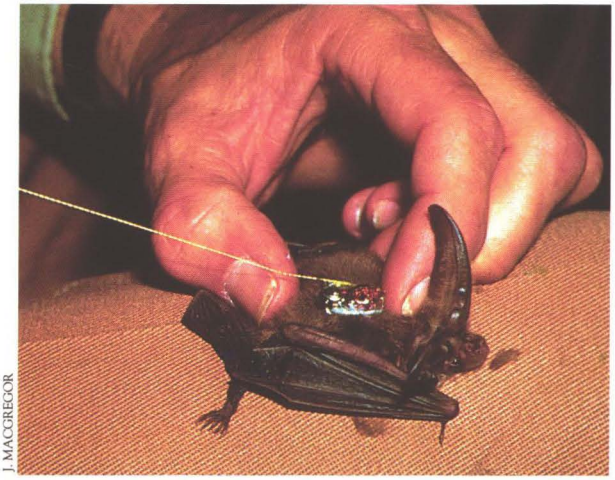
USDA FOREST SERVICE

SPOTLIGHTS ON *EVERY SPECIES COUNTS* PARTNERSHIPS

SOUTHERN REGION UPDATE

In 1990, the Daniel Boone National Forest, in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, the University of Kentucky's Department of Forestry, Eastern Kentucky University, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began a radiotelemetry study of the endangered Virginia big-eared bat. Cooperators captured and outfitted 30 male big-eared bats with tiny transmitters glued to their fur. The bats' nightly movements were tracked following release for the 10-day lifespan of the transmitters.

Information gathered from this telemetry study will enable biologists to determine how far these bats range from their caves and rock shelters to forage, what types of feeding habitat they use, what kinds of insects they prefer, and what areas are important to the bats as travel corridors. The Forest Service contributed $15,000 and cooperators contributed $61,145 to this ***Every Species Counts*** project. A similar study to monitor movement, feeding preferences, and habitat use by female Virginia big-eared bats is slated for 1991.



J. MACGREGOR

A tiny transmitter is glued to the fur of an endangered Virginia big-eared bat.

NORTHERN REGION UPDATE

In the Beartree Challenge project, the Rocky Mountain Ranger District teamed up with the private sector to enhance foraging habitat for the threatened grizzly bear. Habitat improvements included selective harvesting to create buffaloberry shrubfields and plantings of white bark pine trees. Prescribed burning was used to eliminate conifer encroachment in berry shrubfields. Partners in this unique Challenge Cost-Share initiative included B.L. Cooper, Inc., Brand S Corporation, Columbia Falls Forest Products, Jones Equipment, Louisiana Pacific Corporation, Montana Logging Association, Montana Wood Products Association, Montana Sawyer Safety Program, Sun Mountain Logging, Rick Smith Logging, Triple W Equipment, and Conifer Logging.

EVERY SPECIES COUNTS

INTERMOUNTAIN REGION UPDATE

Surveying the Beck Biscuitroot and Kachina Daisy

In partnership with the Utah Natural Heritage Program, the Moab Ranger District completed survey work for the Beck biscuitroot and Kachina daisy, two sensitive plant species primarily restricted to the Dixie National Forest in Utah. This project resulted in identifying species distribution and management needs. Total cost of the project was $8,000 and was shared equally by partners.

DUANE ATWOOD

Classified as "sensitive" by the Forest Service, the Kachina daisy is primarily restricted to the Dixie National Forest in Utah.

STEWARDS OF OUR FRAGILE FRONTIERS

Forest Service and The Nature Conservancy Aid Rare Plants

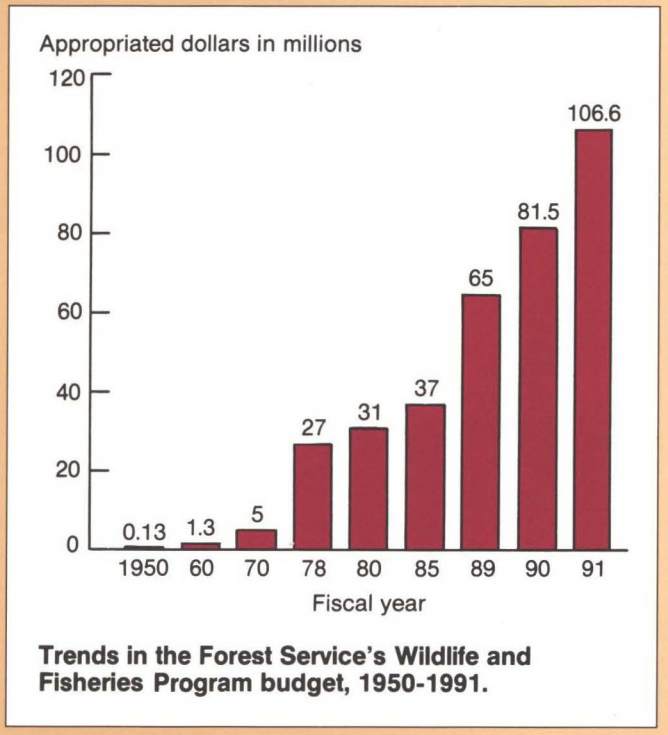
In 1990, The Nature Conservancy and the Forest Service cooperatively funded the first National Endangered Plants Program Manager to coordinate rare plant conservation efforts on National Forest System lands. Through this partnership, a data base is being developed to track the status, management, and recovery of federally listed, as well as sensitive, plant species. This data system ties in to the national network of Natural Heritage Inventory programs.

Trends in Staffing and Budget

Prior to 1970, the Forest Service employed fewer than 100 professionally trained biologists—or one biologist for every 1.9 million acres of the National Forest System. Today, this number has grown to 911 positions, and includes 655 wildlife biologists, 228 fisheries biologists, and 28 botanists. Forest Service biologists are dedicated, service-oriented individuals, and as caretakers of wildlife, fish, and plant resources on National Forest System lands, they provide a critical link to land stewardship for the future.

Equally dramatic has been the growth in the Wildlife and Fisheries Program budget beginning in the late 1970's. This growth corresponds to increased public recognition of the values of fish and wildlife and the tremendous response by State and private groups to match Challenge Cost-Share dollars for habitat improvement. Through Challenge Cost-Share initiatives, citizens have the unique opportunity to participate in wildlife and fisheries habitat enhancement projects and to see first-hand measureable improvements to the resources. As partnerships are strengthened and new partnerships are formed, on-the-ground program accomplishments are expected to increase.

Since 1970, the Wildlife and Fisheries Program budget has increased from about $5 million to more than $106 million for fiscal year 1991. Knutsen-Vandenburg (K-V) fund dollars, monies from timber sales receipts used for wildlife and fisheries habitat improvements and mitigation, added $18 million and $23 million, respectively, to the 1990 and 1991 wildlife and fisheries budgets.



Trends in the Forest Service's Wildlife and Fisheries Program budget, 1950-1991.

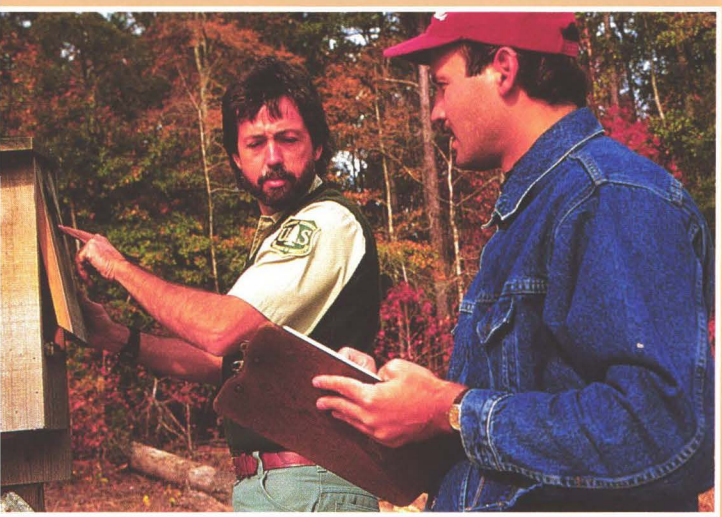
DALE BOUNDS

Forest Service biologists face increasingly complex resource management challenges. In addition to fulfilling roles as caretakers of the plant and animal resources on National Forest System lands, today's biologists must be skilled in conflict resolution, budget management, and communications.

Recognizing the Potential...Embracing the Challenge!

Through habitat improvement projects and the unparalleled support of hundreds of partners, many species have returned to habitats once abandoned. Wetlands have been improved by the construction of dams and nesting islands. Special plant habitats and unique ecosystems have been identified and protected. Fisheries have benefited from development of spawning gravels, constructed fish ladders, and restored streambanks.

Despite these improvements and tremendous growth in numbers of partners and support in recent years, a significant, but not insurmountable, task lies before the Forest Service to ensure that fish, wildlife, and plant resources on the National Forest System are managed and conserved. Inventories on national forests and grasslands are needed on more than 10.7 million acres of wildlife habitat, 2.8 million acres of fish habitat, and more than 34 million acres of potential habitat for endangered, threatened, and sensitive species. And the challenge remains to improve millions of acres of habitat and build thousands of structures to benefit not only wildlife, fish, and rare plants, but the millions of National Forest System users as well.



USDA FOREST SERVICE

The challenges before us are real and the Forest Service and partners embrace them confidently and enthusiastically. Through strong, positive, customer-oriented programs like ***Get Wild, Rise to the Future,*** and ***Every Species Counts***, the Forest Service and its partners can safeguard much of the Nation's biological diversity and, at the same time, contribute to local, regional, and national economies.

Through partnerships, financial commitment, expertise, hard work—*and dedication*—we will extend and expand this world-class resource to meet the needs of generations to come.

USDA FOREST SERVICE

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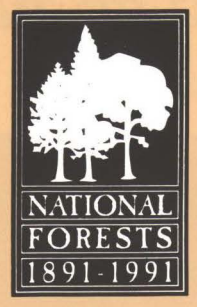

Celebrate National Forests

100 Years of Conservation

The Green Mountain National Forest of Vermont with its brilliant fall colors. The Tongass National Forest—coastal rain forest penetrated by the spectacular Alaskan Inside Passage. The Little Missouri National Grassland of North Dakota—a living library of native grasses, habitat for gamebirds, and grazing area for livestock and deer. These are just a few of the 156 national forests and 19 national grasslands of the 191-million-acre National Forest System.

For 100 years, these lands have belonged to the American people. We all enjoy the resources of these lands: water, scenery, outdoor recreation, wildlife and fish, wilderness, timber, forage, minerals, and historic and prehistoric sites. To safeguard these natural resources, now and in the future, the Forest Service cares for this great American treasure.

Please join the Forest Service during 1991 in celebrating 100 years of conservation on your national forests and grasslands!

May 1991

Join Us!

Opportunities abound for new partnerships on the national forests and grasslands. For information on becoming a partner for wildlife, fish and rare plants, contact your local USDA Forest Service office or write to the national headquarters at the following address: USDA Forest Service, Wildlife and Fisheries Program, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, DC 20090.

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